

## Message Text

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ACTION SIL-01

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 INR-10  
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6551  
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN  
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AMEMBASSY ROME

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRUSSELS 09291

USEEC

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: ELAB, ICFTU  
SUBJ: ICFTU BOARD MEETING: AFL-CIO RELATIONS

1. A REPORT ON WORLD LABOR DEVELOPMENTS PREPARED BY THE  
ICFTU SECRETARIAT FOR THE EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF FREE TRADE UNIONS IN  
HAMBURG THIS WEEK CONTAINS TWO BRIEF ITEMS ON THE U.S.  
WE HAVE OBTAINED A COPY OF SECTIONS OF THE REPORT ON A  
CONFIDENTIAL BASIS.

2. ONE ITEM IN THE NORTH AMERICAN SECTION SUMMARIZES THE  
HISTORY OF LAST WINTER'S 110-DAY COAL STRIKE, CONDUCTED  
BY THE UNITED MINE WORKERS OF AMERICA, WHICH REMAINS AN  
ICFTU AFFILIATE (REPRESENTED ON THE ICFTU EXECUTIVE BOARD  
BY EDWARD P. MONBORNE, A UMW BOARD MEMBER).

3. ANOTHER ITEM IN THE REPORT DEALS WITH THE AFL-CIO, FOR  
WHICH THE ICFTU HAS KEPT TWO REGULAR BOARD SEATS (PLUS  
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FOUR SUBSTITUTE SEATS) VACANT SINCE THE AFL-CIO WITHDREW  
IN 1969. THE REPORT QUOTES, WITHOUT COMMENT, FROM TWO  
LETTERS RECEIVED FROM THE AFL-CIO, THE FIRST FROM  
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR ERNEST S. LEE  
DATED OCTOBER 6, 1977, THE SECOND FROM PRESIDENT GEORGE  
MEANY DATED MARCH 1, 1978.

4. THE FIRST LETTER, ACCORDING TO THE REPORT, REQUESTED INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTATION TO BE USED BY THE AFL-CIO COUNCIL'S INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE "TO DETERMINE, OVER TIME, THE FUTURE VIABILITY OF REAFFILIATION OF THIS FEDERATION TO THE ICFTU." THE REPORT THEN LISTS THE DOCUMENTS SENT TO THE AFL-CIO, AND ALSO MENTIONS THAT THE ICFTU GENERAL SECRETARY WAS, IN DECEMBER LAST YEAR, INVITED TO AN AFL-CIO CONVENTION FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE THE AFL-CIO WITHDREW.

5. IN THE SECOND LETTER, ACCORDING TO THE REPORT, PRESIDENT MEANY WROTE: "THE AFL-CIO'S STANDING COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS HAS CONSIDERED THE POSSIBILITY OF THE REAFFILIATION OF THE AFL-CIO TO THE ICFTU BASED UPON THE INFORMATION WHICH WAS REQUESTED OF THE ICFTU AND SUBSEQUENTLY PROVIDED. IT HAS BEEN DECIDED THAT WHILE THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES DO NOT WARRANT SUCH AN AFFILIATION, THE COMMITTEE WILL CONTINUE TO REVIEW THE MATTER FROM TIME TO TIME."

6. THE SECRETARIAT PAPER MAKES NO COMMENT ON EITHER ITEM, AND NEITHER REQUIRES ANY EXECUTIVE BOARD ACTION. HOWEVER, IN THE VIEW OF ONE SECRETARIAT SOURCE, INCLUSION OF THE AFL-CIO ITEM MIGHT SERVE TO OPEN UP A DISCUSSION OF AFL-CIO RELATIONS AT THE BOARD MEETING.

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7. AT THE SECRETARIAT LEVEL, THE INITIAL REACTION TO THE MEANY LETTER, WE UNDERSTAND, WAS ONE OF DISAPPOINTMENT, MINGLED WITH CONCERN THAT IT MIGHT SOMEHOW KINDLE ANTI-AFL-CIO FEELING WITHIN THE BOARD. HOWEVER, THE MOOD HERE NOW SEEMS TO HAVE CHANGED SOMEWHAT. WE ARE TOLD THAT ATTENTION HAS SHIFTED FROM THE NEGATIVE POINT IN THE SUBORDINATE CLAUSE OF THE LAST SENTENCE OF MEANY'S LETTER, TO THE POSITIVE ONE IN THE MAIN CLAUSE, WHICH STATES THAT THE QUESTION OF AFL-CIO REAFFILIATION REMAINS OPEN. HINTON

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## Message Attributes

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